

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6292
INFO USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 05121

VIENNA FOR USIAEA

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: TECH FR CH
SUBJ: PROSPECTIVE FRENCH NUCLEAR REACTOR SALE TO PRC

REF: STATE 13405

1. SUMMARY: ON FEB 15 DURING AMBASSADOR GERARD SMITH'S VISIT TO PARIS, MFA NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION ADVISOR JACOMET BRIEFLY REVIEWED THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING THE PROSPECTIVE SALE OF A FRAMATOME NUCLEAR REACTOR TO THE PRC. HE ASKED AMBASSADOR SMITH FOR AN INDICATION FROM THE USG ON ITS POSITION REGARDING SUCH A SALE. AMBASSADOR SMITH INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ASK FOR A PROMPT RESPONSE FROM WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.
2. JACOMET AND PHILIPPE LOUET DISCUSSED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED SALE WITH AMBASSADOR SMITH AND EMBOFF DURING DAY-LONG DISCUSSIONS ON A NUMBER OF NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUES. LOUET CARRIED THE CONVERSATION BEGINNING WITH MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD'S INTENTION TO
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DISCUSS THE ISSUE WITH SECRETARY VANCE BUT THAT ACTUAL COMMENTS WERE MADE IN WASHINGTON BY THE FRENCH EMBASSY (AS COVERED IN REFTEL). LOUET CONTINUED NOTING THAT PM BARRE DURING HIS RECENT TRIP TO CHINA HAD BEEN ASKED IF FRANCE WOULD SELL A 900 MWE FRAMATOME PWR TO THE PRC. ACCORDING TO LOUET, BARRE DID NOT SAY YES AND HE DID NOT SAY NO. THERE WAS AGREEMENT THAT A CHINESE TECHNICAL

INFORMATION TEAM ON ENERGY MATTERS WOULD TOUR FRENCH NUCLEAR AND HYDRAULIC FACILITIES DURING THE LATTER HALF OF FEBRUARY. LOUET NOTED THAT FRAMATOME HAD RECENTLY BEEN CONTACTED BY CHINA ASKING IF FRAMATOME WERE IN A POSITION TO SELL SUCH A REACTOR; LOUET STATED THAT THE GOF INSTRUCTIONS TO FRAMATOME GIVEN ON FEB 13 WERE TO THE EFFECT THAT FRAMATOME MAY DISCUSS ALL TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF SUCH A SALE BUT MUST REFRAIN FROM GETTING INTO ANY POLICY ASPECTS. LOUET ASSUMES THAT, IF A REASONABLE COMMERCIAL DEAL IS FORTHCOMING, FRANCE IS PREPARED TO PROCEED WITH THE SALE. LOUET STATED THAT FRANCE HAD NO POLITICAL OBJECTIONS TO SUCH A SALE TO CHINA.

3. LOUET REVIEWED THE EXISTING TWO CHANNELS OF APPROVAL FOR SUCH A SALE WHICH INVOLVE THE USG: 1) THROUGH COCOM, AND 2) THROUGH THE FRAMATOME LICENSING ARRANGEMENT WITH WESTINGHOUSE. LOUET SAID THE GOF WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING IF THE USG HAS ANY POLITICAL OBJECTIONS TO THE PROSPECTIVE SALE BY FRANCE OF THE 900 MWE FRAMATOME REACTOR TO THE PRC. AMBASSADOR SMITH INDICATED THAT HE PERSONALLY SAW NO PROBLEMS TO SUCH A SALE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF US NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIONS AND THAT HE WOULD REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT THAT WASHINGTON'S VIEWS BE PROVIDED WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK.
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4. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FROM THE DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON'S REACTION TO THE FRENCH REQUEST AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE USG HAS ANY POLITICAL OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED FRENCH SALE OF A REACTOR TO THE PRC. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IF THIS RESPONSE WAS AVAILABLE WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK SO THAT FRAMATOME MAY TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE VISITING CHINESE TECHNICAL TEAM.

5. FOR VIENNA: PLEASE PASS THIS CABLE TO AMBASSADOR SMITH AS IT WAS PREPARED AFTER HE LEFT PARIS.
MYERSON

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